

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a precursor web;
- b) providing a three-dimensional image transfer device;
- c) hydroentangling said precursor web on said image transfer device to form a patterned and imaged nonwoven fabric;
- d) applying a pre-dye finish to said nonwoven fabric to impart high abrasion resistance, followed by curing of said pre-dye finish; and
- e) dyeing of said nonwoven fabric.

Claim 2 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said precursor web comprising layers of polyester fibers.

Claim 3 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said precursor web comprising layers of polyester and nylon fibers

Claim (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said precursor web is hydroentangled on a foraminous surface prior to said step of hydroentangling said web on said image transfer device.

Claim 5 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said pre-dye finish comprising a melamine cross-linking resin.

Claim 6 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said fabric is dyed by the method selected from the group consisting of jet dyeing, pad dyeing, screen printing, transfer printing, and the combinations thereof.

Claim 7 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a precursor web;
- b) providing a three-dimensional image transfer device;
- c) hydroentangling said precursor web on said image transfer device to form a patterned and imaged nonwoven fabric;
- d) applying a pre-dye finish to said nonwoven fabric to impart high abrasion resistance, followed by curing of said pre-dye finish;
- e) dyeing of said nonwoven fabric;
- f) applying a post-dye finish to said nonwoven fabric to impart high abrasion resistance, followed by curing of said post-dye finish.

Claim 8 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 7, said post-dye finish comprising a cross-linking resin.

Claim 9 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 8, said post-dye finish comprising a carbodimide cross-linking resin.

Claim 10 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 8, said post-dye finish comprising a polycarbonate cross-linking resin.

Claim 11 (withdrawn). A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 8, said post-dye finish comprising a mix of polycarbonate and carbodimide cross-linking resins.

Claim 12 (currently amended). A durable nonwoven fabric, comprising:

- a) a precursor web comprising polyester fibers;
- b) said precursor web being imaged and patterned by hydroentanglement on a three-dimensional image transfer device to form a nonwoven fabric;
- c) said nonwoven fabric receiving a substantially uniform, saturation application of a pre-dye finish comprising an elastomeric polymer emulsion followed by a curing step, said finish being formulated and applied in a sufficient quantity to enhance abrasion resistance properties of said nonwoven fabric;
- d) dyeing of said nonwoven fabric;
- e) the resulting nonwoven fabric exhibiting a final basis weight of between about 2.0 ounces and 6.0 ounces, a Martindale Abrasion Value of at least 50,000 cycles, a combined drape value of less than 2.45 grams force per gram fabric weight and a combined bend value of less than 0.42 milligram-centimeter per mil thickness.

Claim 13. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said precursor web comprising layers of said polyester fibers.

Claim 14. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said precursor web comprising layers of said polyester fibers and layers of nylon fibers

Claim 15 (canceled).

Claim 16. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a final basis weight of between about 3.0 ounces and about 4.0 ounces.

Claim 17. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a color fastness under wet test conditions of at least 5.

Claim 18. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a color fastness under dry test conditions of at least 5.

Claim 19. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a combined Elmendorf tear value of at least about 32 grams force per gram fabric weight.

Claim 20 (currently amended). A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric ~~exhibiting~~ exhibiting an absorbency of at least about 0.25 percent capacity per second per gram fabric weight.

Claim 21. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric is further processed by receiving a substantially uniform application of a post-dye finish

Claim 22 (currently amended). A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said ~~nowoven~~ nonwoven fabric is used in the fabrication of apparel.

Claim 23 (new). A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, wherein said pre-dye finish comprises a chemical catalyst.

Claim 24 (new). A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, wherein said pre-dye finish comprises a wetting and dispersing agent.

Application No. 09/658,763
Amendment dated October 15, 2003
Reply to Office Action of July 15, 2003

Claim 25 (new). A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, wherein said pre-dye finish comprises a melamine cross-linking resin.